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**34. Heller-Andrist, Simone . 2012. The Friction of the Frame: Derrida's  
Parergon in Literature. Tübingen: Francke, 277 pp**

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verts the predominant image of Victorian-Edwardian masculinity promoted in the public schools at the time and links the novels intertextually to e.g. the Sherlock Holmes novels and Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat*, this aspect is more thoroughly examined here. Equally, the creation of a very fictional 'Englishness' links Wodehouse's novels with Agatha Christie's and thus 'Englishness' as it is created through intratextual (not only intertextual) means is analysed at the beginning of the chapter, before the novels are compared to Agatha Christie's. The novels' combination of ahistoricity and incongruous references to the historical surroundings is a further feature analysed in this chapter; they employ 'double timing' similarly to Rex Stout's novels. Moreover, there are instances which can be interpreted as parodies of the hardboiled 'tough guys'. The intertextual relationships to comic fiction show that Wodehouse's novels are firmly rooted in the English/British humourist tradition, but also rewrite it.

The references to musical comedy and film create mnemonic and affective responses in readers and achieve a reception that resembles that of the visual media. The reader visualises scenes, hears songs/noises and is immersed in the fictional world. Furthermore, incongruities between the visual and the verbal as well as between different visual images are used for the creation of humorous scenes.

In concluding, the study presents the reading of a historical reader, namely the corporate authorship of the BBC film adaptation *Jeeves and Wooster* (1990–1993). It shows both the novels' ongoing popularity and predominance in cultural memory as well as presents evidence for my readings in the preceding chapters, since it argues that the adaptations' success in recreating the 'Wodehouse tone' depends to some extent on their similar use of intertextual and intermedial references. Moreover, the visibility of the novels is compared with its translation into a visual medium and thus gives further insight into medium-specific ways of creating visual humour.

**34. Heller-Andrist, Simone. 2012. *The Friction of the Frame: Derrida's Parergon in Literature*. Tübingen: Francke, 277 pp., EUR 58.00.**

**Key words:** frame; parergon; deconstruction; Reader-Response Theory; oscillation

In her monograph, Simone Heller-Andrist applies the Kantian and Derridean *parergon* to English literature. At the centre of her study lies the fact that frames "not only protect; they also expose" (11). This double logic of the frame, namely that it

establishes boundaries the violation of which it also invites (Newman 1986, 154) is embodied by Jacques Derrida's *parergon*, a concept that figures in Kant and which Derrida describes in much detail in *The Truth in Painting*. The *parergon* is a frame that serves the work, the *ergon*. The fact that it renders a service, however, exposes the need of the work to be served and thus a potential flaw or lack in the work. The interaction between the two causes friction, such as incongruities or gaps we notice during the reading process. This gives the reader a clue that the frame is likely to influence or even manipulate his or her reading of the work. Friction between work and frame is thus, on the one hand, the main indicator of parergonality and, on the other, the prime signal for a potential conditioning of the reader.

Jacques Derrida describes the tripartite structure of *hors d'oeuvre* (context), *parergon* (frame), and *ergon* (work) in the visual arts, all of which can be transposed to literary texts. These three entities are constantly interacting and thus establish an ongoing oscillation. According to the intensity of this interaction, the frame figures either as *complement* or as *supplement* to the work, depending on the moment of parergonal oscillation: when the *parergon* executes its full force upon the work, it writes itself fully into the work and complements it, only to fall back into the state of a passive supplement afterwards. The *parergon* is thus able to unite a range of different conditions within itself in order to enable this sort of communication. These conditions range from inert supplement to most active complement.

When one traces the process of oscillating interaction between work and frame, the *parergon*, according to Derrida, "effaces itself [...]" at the moment it deploys its greatest energy" (Derrida 1987, 61). In a literary work, this means that a preface, dedication, or even a literary discourse that surrounds the work can influence our production of textual meaning during the reading process considerably. One example that illustrates this fact well is an intertextual constellation. Once we know that a rewritten work is based on an original, and provided that we have an idea of the original text, this very frame will keep influencing the meaning of the rewritten text during the reading as well as after we have finished the book: it seems impossible to keep the two texts apart in our minds. The original work, functioning as frame, attempts to complement the work wherever there are apparent gaps or lacks. The reader might be unaware of these moments of complementation, as these are the moments in which the frame writes itself into the work and thus effaces itself.

According to Derrida, there is an "internal structural link which rivets [the *parergon*] to the lack in the interior of the *ergon*" (Derrida 1987, 59). This lack, which often literally constitutes a lack in the work such as a stylistic flaw, an insecurity on the part of the author concerning a work's reception, or a political

subtext that needs to be hidden well to evade censorship, is the reason for friction between work and frame. It is the key to the role of the *parergon*: once we detect interaction between work and frame through friction, and once we investigate the lack that connects them, we can find out what function the frame, the *parergon*, serves. This can be done by means of scrutinizing various stages in the oscillating interaction between work and frame. On the basis of this interaction, Derrida's *parergon* becomes a valid methodological tool that allows a close analysis of the mechanisms involved in the reading process.

After the theoretical part, Simone Heller-Andrist's study presents a tripartite set of model analyses, which range from the fifteenth to the twenty-first century. The first and the last of these works, chronologically speaking, are an original morality play and its rewriting with the same title, *Everyman*. An Elizabethan play – *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – comes after the medieval one; then follow a journalistic novel (*Moll Flanders*), a satirical novel (*Tom Jones*) and a Gothic novel (*The Castle of Otranto*) – all from the eighteenth century; there is a female *Bildungsroman* – or Gothic novel, or autobiography, or fairy tale (*Jane Eyre*) – which communicates with its prequel written in the mid-twentieth century (*Wide Sargasso Sea*), an American romance (*The Scarlet Letter*) and a classic nineteenth-century novel (*Middlemarch*); finally, and before the overall frame closes in the twenty-first century, the age of Modernism is represented by Forster's *A Room with a View*. In the final part of her study, Simone Heller-Andrist investigates the question of power in parergonal constructs.

The parergonal interaction implicitly raises the question of power. Which entity, *ergon* or *parergon*, is the more powerful one? Even though one might be tempted to consider the *parergon* the more powerful part of the two, its force is utterly dependent on its interaction with the work. Foucault claims that “a relationship of power is [...] a mode of action.” He argues that power does not act immediately upon other subjects, but that it “acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on existing actions or on those which may arise in the present or the future” (Foucault 1982, 789). This means that power is not a possession (Mills 2004, 17), but a mode of action. The entities involved in parergonal interaction gain their power from each other, and lose it in isolation. With regard to their potential, parergonal paratexts are not to be underrated. Any decision to regard them as subordinate to the core work constitutes a truncation of interpretative possibilities. In this sense, this study rehabilitates specific types of frames and potentially places paratexts on a par with the works they refer to. At the same time, it reminds readers, and especially literary critics, to also critically reflect on their own position towards the text and on the fact that their reading might already be manipulated by the parergonal power at work.

By means of the concept of the *parergon*, we can approach not only paratextual, narrative, or discursive frames, but also intertextual relationships. Since the application of the concept is based on a basic textual constellation and an internal mechanism, its range is wide and transcends – or complements – previously established textual categories.

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**35. Herbe, Sarah. 2012. *Characters in New British Hard Science Fiction with a Focus on Genetic Engineering in Paul McAuley, Alastair Reynolds and Brian Stableford*. Heidelberg: Winter, 249 pp., EUR 39.00.**

**Key words:** science fiction; narratology; genetic engineering; characters

Hard science fiction, a subgenre of science fiction that is especially based on scientific plausibility and extrapolation, has experienced a renaissance from the mid-1990s onwards. While hard science fiction was traditionally an American phenomenon, the renaissance is largely carried by new British writers of science fiction. The new popularity of the genre has led to an increased critical interest in hard science fiction, but there is no study focusing exclusively on British hard science fiction so far.

*Characters in New British Hard Science Fiction with a Focus on Genetic Engineering in Paul McAuley, Alastair Reynolds and Brian Stableford* addresses a corpus of new hard science fiction novels by British writers published between 1995 and 2004. The main focus is on three hard science fiction series by McAuley, Reynolds and Stableford. The book offers a thematic-narratological approach. Thematically, the focus is on human genetic engineering; a topic that has only recently been fully accepted into the repertory of hard science fiction themes, which used to concentrate on astronomy, physics or mathematics. This thematic focus is combined with an analysis of the presentation of characters, a narrative category usually neglected in science fiction criticism.

By combining the thematic focus on genetic engineering with an emphasis on narrative strategies used for the presentation of characters, this book proposes